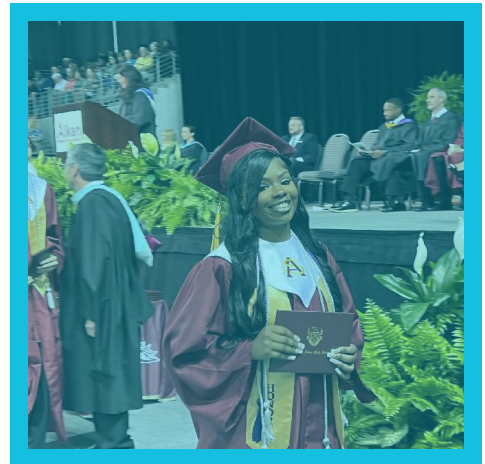
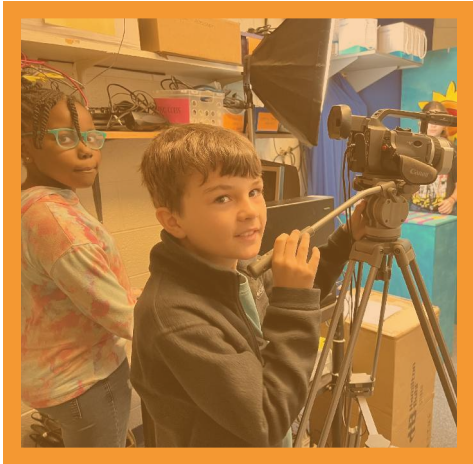


SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT 2022-2023





VISION

Aiken County will be the area's leader in providing innovative personalized learning, attracting the highest quality professionals and collaborating with our partners to provide a better quality of life for our students and families.

GOALS

1

Ensure high-quality learning experiences that will positively impact academic achievement and meet the needs of all students

2

Maintain positive, safe, and nurturing environments for all students and staff

3

Refine processes and procedures to recruit and retain high-quality educators and support staff



FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT

As I reflect back on the 2022-2023 school year and endeavor to summarize the work underway in achievement of goals we established, I am both grateful and humbled by the results I'm proud to share. These outcomes are certainly not mine alone but the result of the tremendous efforts of our teachers, leadership, students and families in our shared commitment to the success of our public schools.

Our culture of continuous improvement makes identifying an area of focus possible. With heightened emphasis on mathematics, we can and will improve our students' reasoning abilities as we put memorization on the sidelines, dive deeper into mathematical concepts and make tangible the abstract for the benefit of our learners. Our leadership has an established presence in our schools with a desire to serve in a coaching capacity as we work together to enhance teaching and learning as we prepare students to solve real-world problems.

School safety is paramount in all that we do. We are committed to creating positive learning environments while balancing our responsibilities to ensure school safety and efficiently manage the implementation of safety measures. The additions of weapons detectors in all schools and safety monitors, as well as restructuring the entries to some campuses and monitoring the online activities of students, are some of the ways we balanced those responsibilities last year. The 2022-2023 school year also allowed for the completion of Hammond Hill Elementary, the groundbreaking of Wagener-Salley High School and an agreement with Aiken Technical College to construct our new Career and Technology Center on their campus.

As we navigate the continued challenges of the teacher shortage and staffing shortfalls in other areas, we have implemented creative approaches and incentivized employment with our District. The School Board's support with these efforts has proved tremendously helpful and allowed Aiken County Public Schools to remain competitive. This year, we revamped our "We Care" district-to-teacher support program and designed exciting new ways to connect to our students, staff, parents and community such as *Let's Relate*, our employee newsletter, and *Sit Down with the Super*, a video interview series, which launched with a student interviewing me this spring.

The following pages are a brief overview of the efforts underway in our District. We are grateful for your support and partnership as we work together to keep Aiken County Public Schools on the horizon of all that is new and exciting in education!

With appreciation for all that you do to ensure extraordinary possibilities,



King Laurence

Superintendent, Aiken County Public Schools



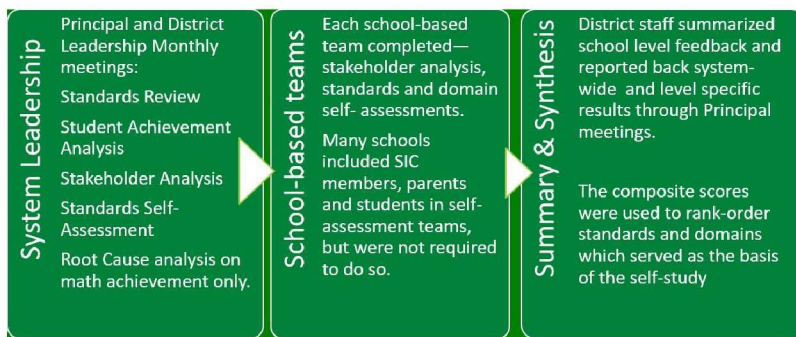
**KING LAURENCE,
SUPERINTENDENT**



GOAL NUMBER ONE:

Ensure high-quality learning experiences that will positively impact academic achievement and meet the needs of all students

Utilize district and school data to focus on continuous improvement



- Reviewed and analyzed student data to determine specific needs.
- Adjusted/modified district strategic plans to align with Cognia findings.
- Collaborated with school and district-level leadership teams to make data-informed decisions regarding instructional materials and professional development.

Establish, promote, and support teaching and learning

- Welcomed new teachers and other employees with a consistent yet unique onboarding process as part of our Ignite Orientation.
- Trained mentors and evaluators to support new teachers.
- Developed a plan for the implementation of conceptual math so that students have a thorough understanding of mathematical concepts versus procedural methods.
- Provided high-quality and on-going professional development through purchased services and the utilization of Content Support Specialists in grades K-12.
- Provided elect training to school and district-level administrators in preparation for student engagement focused learning environments.
- Encouraged National Board Certification.

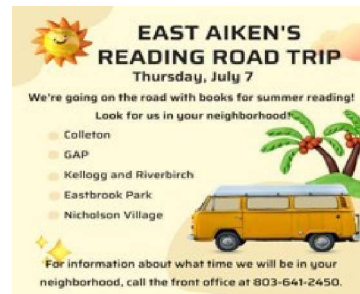
- Icebreaker
- Tour of the school
- Instructional Framework
- Lesson Plan requirements
- Professionalism
- Supplies FAQ's
- Meet & Greet with Buddy and/or Mentor.
 - Buddies are assigned to new to district teachers.
 - Mentors are assigned to all Induction (first year) teachers.



... teaching and learning

- Empowered teachers to lead content specific professional development opportunities for the successful implementation of 4 X 4 Block Scheduling.
- Provided on-going support through modeling, demonstration, and peer-consulting for the 4 X 4 Block instructional delivery.
- Reviewed new academic standards to ensure support is available and aligned.
- Provided professional development and support for the successful implementation of the Summer Academic Recovery Plan (SARP).
- Reviewed student/teacher ratios to ensure balance and optimal learning opportunities.
- Established, reviewed, and approved Title I plans to determine instructional needs for the 21 elementary, 12 middle, and 2 high Title I identified schools.

Aiken County high schools transition to block scheduling



CLASSROOM CAP – 3RD GRADE

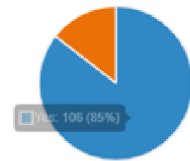
Allocations based on student projections/23:1 ratio

Lever	20.50	Jefferson	21.75
Millbrook	20.34	Byrd	21.80
Oakwood-Windsor	19.75	Clearwater	17.67
East Aiken	18.00	Gloverville	15.67
Chukker Creek	21.60	Warrenville	18.33
Aiken Elem	18.50	Graniteville	21.00
North Aiken	17.75	RS-M Elem	18.00
Belvedere	20.75	Corbett	19.00
Hammond Hill	20.83	Greendale	20.30
North Augusta Elem	21.60	Redcliffe	22.50
Mossy Creek	22.40		

Did the content in Rubicon Atlas for Quarter 2 (Unit Overview, EQs, LOs, KUDs, and Assessment) help to guide teachers in instructional planning toward the benchmark or Quarter 2 grade level assessment?

[More Details](#)

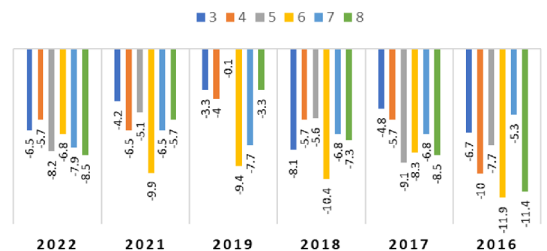
Yes 106
No 18



Maintain One-to-One Technology for all students

- Provided instructional support at the school levels through the utilization of the Instructional Technology Specialists.
- Utilized Schoology, the district's learning management system (LMS), to access instructional materials, collaboration, assessment, and instant feedback.
- Provided student engagement opportunities through Schoology.
- Provided targeted interventions to close individualized learning gaps.
- Worked with Board to designate \$7 million fund balance to help fund future 1:1 replacements of ESSER-funded technology.

AIKEN COUNTY GRADE LEVEL GAP COMPARED TO THE STATE



Provide alternative learning opportunities for students

- Utilized Aiken iNOVATE (Ai) and Aiken County Virtual School (ACVS).
- Expanded Ai enrollment for the 2023-2024 academic year.
- Provided Dual Modality opportunities.
- Provided learning opportunities at Center for Innovative Learning (CIL) and XSEL, as needed.
- Provided eLearning opportunities for students.
- Engaged students in technology repairs through a partnership with Dell.



AIKEN iNOVATE
premier district - teachers - virtual education

PARENT INFORMATION NIGHTS

January 12 at Leavelle McCampbell, 6:30PM
January 17 at Six Points, 6:00PM
January 19 at Ridge Spring-Monetta, 5:00PM
January 26 at Paul Knox, 6:00PM
January 31 at Silver Bluff, 6:00PM
February 9 at Wagener-Sailey, 6:00PM

APPLY NOW FOR THE 2023-24 SCHOOL YEAR

Scan the QR Code for the application or visit acpsd.net/innovate

Contact Information

ai@acpsd.net
803-641-2428
www.acpsd.net/innovate

Six Points Learning Center
130 Avery Lane Aiken, SC 29801



Aiken County public schools switching to virtual learning Friday due to Tropical Storm Nicole

BY STEPHANIE HILL SHILL@AIKENSTANDARD.COM
NOV 10, 2022

Expand Higher Education Opportunities

- Provided higher level education pathways through Aiken Scholars Academy and the Early College at Midland Valley.
- Provided varied educational opportunities through Aiken County Career and Technology Center.
- Utilized MOX settlement funds to move forward with Aiken County Career and Technology Center on Aiken Technical College Campus.
- Completed formal progression plan and articulation agreement for Cyber with Aiken Technical College and USC-Aiken.
- Expanded learning opportunities for students and staff in partnership with Grand Canyon University.

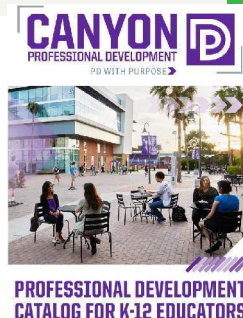
Aiken Scholars Academy ranked one of top high schools in South Carolina



techno camp

Sign Up

Attention Area 5th Graders... Join us for ACCTC's Techno Camp!



CANYON
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
PD WITH PURPOSE

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CATALOG FOR K-12 EDUCATORS



Teacher, Student, and Parent Engagement

- Met with student and parent advisory groups to hear concerns, answer questions, and hear suggestions regarding all aspects of Aiken County Public Schools.
- Held "Block Student Rally" to engage students in sharing concerns about the transition to Block Schedule and to seek their leadership in communicating the specifics with stakeholders.
- Held Town Hall Meetings for input from the community for zoning our new middle school.
- Participated in read-aloud events across the district.
- Launched a video series "Sit Down with the Super" so that information and announcements can be shared from the superintendent's office through an interview format which features students from across the district conducting interviews.
- Encouraged ACPSD Teacher Forum to be active in meeting, collaborating and making suggestions to district leaders.



GOAL NUMBER TWO:

Maintain positive, safe, and nurturing environments for all students and staff

Weapons Detectors



- Invested in increased campus security with \$1.1M from the fund balance for Weapons Detectors for every school.
- Delivered and began training on use of weapons detectors.
- Units are different than the more standard "metal detectors," and allow high volume secure entry are utilized in theme parks and are ideal for random use in high-volume entry points, such as schools.

Safety Monitors

- Recommended by Director of Security for addressing student misbehavior at the elementary level.
- Board approved funding one per elementary school to monitor student behavior in non-classroom activities before, during and after school to maintain campus safety.



Universal Meal Program

- Expanded Community Eligibility Program (CEP) allows students at 22 schools to eat breakfast and lunch on campus without cost.
- In the coming year, 2023-2024, the program will expand to all students at all schools.



Facility Safety Improvements



- Redesigned entrances to secure foyer.
- Decreased intruder risk by limiting access to entry point.

Secure, State-of-the-Art New Schools

- Designed and constructed Highland Springs Middle, which will open for the 2023-2024 school year.
- Implemented parent and student engagement efforts to identify zoning, then welcome Area 2 and Area 3 families to their newly-zoned school.



Campus Re-Construction



- Completed reconstruction of Hammond Hill Elementary School in June 2023.
- Phase 2 construction finalized with addition of cafeteria/kitchen.



Groundbreaking New Construction

- Celebrated the beginning of construction for Wagener-Salley's new campus in November 2022, with staff, students, community members and elected officials at a groundbreaking ceremony.

Aiken school district breaks ground on new Wagener-Salley High School

BY STEPHANIE HILL SHILL@AIKENSTANDARD.COM
NOV 1, 2022



A groundbreaking was held on Tuesday at the site of the new Wagener-Salley High School at the corner of Seavern Road and A.L. Corbett Circle. (Stephanie Hill/staff)

STAFF PHOTO BY STEPHANIE HILL

BUY NOW



AIKEN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT 2022-2023 • WWW.ACPSD.NET

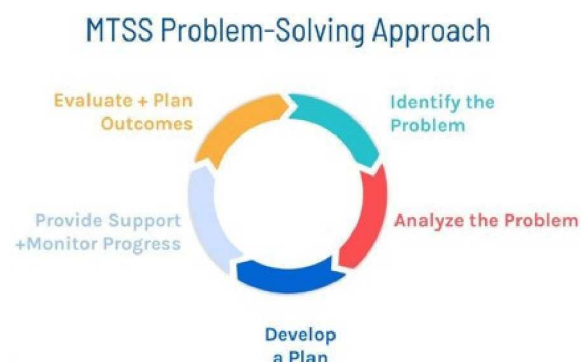
Increased Online Monitoring

- Educational Technology piloted the use of a comprehensive online student safety platform to monitor emails and internet searches on district issued student devices.



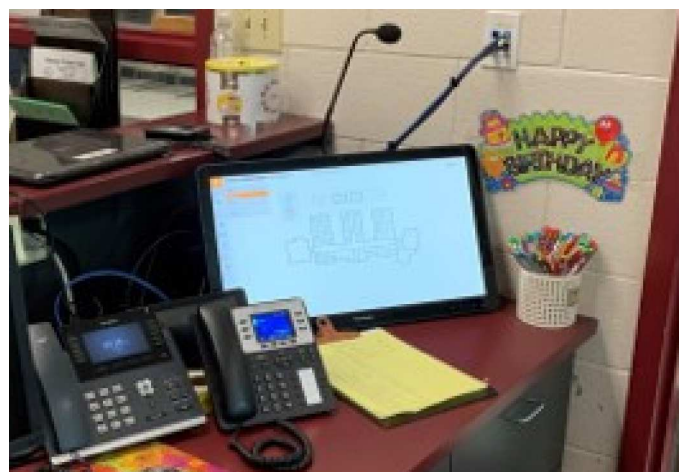
Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

- MTSS was implemented over the course of the year



Audio Enhancement / Security Button Lanyard

- Implemented a voice amplification and clarification lanyard for classroom teachers which enables teachers to be heard throughout the classroom and connects the classroom to the office/administration for emergency support.
- Anticipated district-wide completion by December 2023.



GOAL NUMBER THREE:

Refine processes and procedures to recruit and retain high quality educators and support staff

Rewarding new hires & returning employees

- Partnered with a community provider to cover the expense of TB testing, a state requirement for all new employees (removing this financial barrier to employment).
- \$10K bonus, the largest in district history, implemented for critical needs area teachers signing a three year contract in special programs, middle and high school math and science.
- Initiated \$1K retention bonus for all returning employees.
- Increased Cost of Living Adjustment to 3%.
- Added additional step to all pay scales.
- Elevated Bus Driver Pay twice, totaling \$2/hr.
- Increased Teacher Salaries by \$2,500 per cell.

Aiken County schools boost perks to tackle bus driver shortage



Aiken County school board approves \$10,000 sign-on bonus for some teachers

BY STEPHANIE HILL SHILL@AIKENSTANDARD.COM
JAN 15, 2023



SECOND/FINAL READING

- Updated revenue for indirect cost and latest SCDE projections
- Increased COLA from 1% (First Reading) to 3%
- Created position for Assistant Director of Facilities Construction
- Created position for second Hearing Officer (May 2 special-called)
- Added a step at top of teacher and other scales
- \$100,000 for salary study (non-recurring)
- \$1,000 bonus for pay scales not impacted by the previous bonus decision on January 24, 2023 (non-recurring)
- Remaining \$694,653 set aside for purposes TBD (non-recurring)
- General Fund – Second/Final Reading = \$248,982,727, pending discussion



Record Numbers in Recruitment

- Hosted Two MEGA Hiring Events (Fall & Spring) with all schools/locations represented.
- Held targeted Hiring Events with on-the-spot job offers
- Attended 13 College & University Events.
- Hosted a Lunch & Learn at Coastal Carolina and "Be A Piece of Aiken County" at USC Aiken.



MEGA

HIRING EVENT



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4 | 8AM-12PM

Join us for our spring hiring event at
Aiken High School
 449 Rutland Drive, Aiken 29801

- **Apply Now** at acpsd.net or Scan the QR Code Below
- Onsite Interviews & On the Spot Job Offers + Hiring Bonuses
- Immediate Vacancies and 2023-24 Positions + TBD Contracts
- Walk-ins Welcome!

Hiring for Certified & Classified Positions!

- Certified Teachers
- Custodians
- Head Start
- School Food Service
- Special Education Aides
- Transportation

Questions? Call 803.641.2428
 Ashley Watson | ashleyw@acpsd.net
 Hope Mullins | hmullins@acpsd.net

Facebook.com/ACPSD



AIKEN COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

YOU'RE INVITED TO

BE A PIECE OF AIKEN COUNTY

OCTOBER 10, 2022
4:00 PM

DISTRICT OFFICE
 1000 Brookhaven Drive
 Aiken, SC 29803





CUSTODIAL

HIRING EVENT



Join Aiken County Public School District's Custodial Team!

ACPSD District Office

REGISTER BY JUNE 11

BRING YOUR RESUME

QUESTIONS?

WWW.ACPSD.NET
803-641-2428

ONSITE INTERVIEWS

+

ON THE SPOT JOB OFFERS

REGISTER NOW



WALK-INS WELCOME

Reenergizing retention

- Convened a committee for custodial retention in which school and maintenance leaders collaborated to review high custodial turnover rate.
- Initiated pilot program for Stay Interviews and expanded career development opportunities for all employees through Aiken Leads.
- Generated exit interview data to identify trends and address areas of improvement.

Develop a schedule and strategies to balance custodial responsibilities.		
Implementation Steps	Timeline	Resources Needed
1. Administration, custodians, and maintenance will work together to develop a cleaning schedule.	Within a week of school starting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggested schedule from maintenance School master schedule Time to meet
2. Administration and custodians will work together to determine appropriate times and develop a system to complete duties outside of the job description. (For example, a protocol will be used if faculty and staff need assistance with moving furniture after other duties are complete or on teacher workdays.)	A day before request is needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a central location for maintenance requests

Teacher, employee voice

- Reestablished Teacher Forum.
- Supported Teacher Forum in their areas of interest, including teacher morale through Shine Shout Outs.
- Launched One World quarterly meetings for support and connectivity among International Teachers.



TEACHER FORUM

workshop

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3RD

meet & greet **&** lunch
11:45 AM NOON

SIX POINTS • 130 AVERY LANE, AIKEN

RSVP TO RHETT SHERMAN • TEACHER OF THE YEAR
RSHERMAN@ACPSD.NET OR (803) 761-0062

SUBMIT A SHOUT OUT

[SHINE Shout Outs Form](#)

SHOUT OUT ACPSD TEACHERS + STAFF WHO

Shine!

Presented by ACPSD's Teacher Forum

www.acpsd.net/teacher_forum

Unencumbered lunches; capped class sizes

- Added aide positions (1-2/elementary) to create 30 minutes unencumbered time for teachers in K-5 and Special Education.
- Capped elementary level class sizes to support lower pupil-teacher ratios.

- 4K program 20 to 1 (capped at 20); plus aide
- Kindergarten 25 to 1; plus aide
- 1st grade 16 to 1
- 2nd through 5th grades 23 to 1

Note: Some elementary grades' class sizes further lowered through use of Title I or Title II allocations

BOARD AGENDA ITEM

SUBJECT:

Consideration on the 30-Minute Unencumbered Time Requirement

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Legislation (S.946) passed in Spring 2022 requires 30 minutes of unencumbered, free-of-duty, time for full-time kindergarten through 5th grade teachers and for elementary, middle, and high teachers who have a special education class for more than 20% of the school day with students who are removed from the general education setting. School districts cannot offer additional compensation in lieu of unencumbered time. This change takes effect in the 2023 – 2024 school year.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION:

Current staffing levels at elementary schools prevent the District from complying with the requirements of this legislation. The Administration has determined a need for one or two aide-level positions, per school, depending on a school's enrollment. The Administration proposes allocating schools with less than 350 students in grades kindergarten through five with one position and all other elementary schools with a second position, for a total of 38 FTE. One position at each school would serve as a safety monitor. The estimated cost of salary and fringe is \$1,330,000.



Demonstrating "We Care"

- Reinvented support program for District representative support to new-to-the-district teachers.
- We Care Representatives provided monthly visits/check-in.



Task or problem-focused support



Personal and emotional support



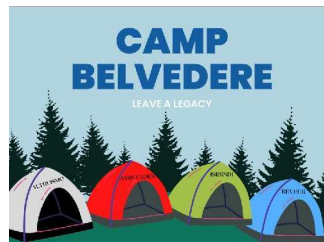
Reflection on teaching practices



Collegial collaboration

Celebrating Our Stars

- Expanded annual STARS of Public Education employee recognition program and celebration event with Professional Staff Member of the Year and District Administrator of the Year.
- Participated in staff celebration days, including many with personal visits from our District's leadership.
- Reinstated School Spotlights and Board Recognition at meetings.
- Held AMP THE APPRECIATION and the District's Fine Arts Festival on back-to-back days to further celebrate employees and bring recognition to our District's talented students



AMP THE APPRECIATION

A CELEBRATION OF AIKEN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS EMPLOYEES IN THE ALLEY

PERFORMING IN THE ALLEY

5:00-5:10 PM Ridge Spring-Monetta Middle/High Drumline
 5:15-5:35 PM Aiken High Scenes from "Alice in Wonderland"
 5:40-6:00 PM Aiken High Jazz Band - Jazz, Rock, Funk & Latin
 6:05-6:25 PM Aiken Elementary Chorus
 6:30-6:50 PM Silver Bluff High Jazz Messengers
 7:00-8:30 PM **HEADLINER**
SAVANNAH SUNDAY

PERFORMING IN THE AIKEN CENTER FOR THE ARTS
AS YOU EXPERIENCE STUDENT ARTWORK FROM EVERY SCHOOL IN OUR DISTRICT ON DISPLAY IN THE ART CENTER GALLERIES

5:30-5:50 PM East Aiken School of the Arts' Student Musicians Jonathan & Jillian Blankenship (Piano & Harp)
 6:00-6:20 PM East Aiken School of the Arts' Ukulele Group ("Ho Hey" & "Good to be Alive")



Growing Our Own; Aiken Leads, Professional Growth Partnerships

- Expanded partnerships with post-secondary organizations to offer teachers and staff continued education opportunities.
- Offered online support for those needing help with Praxis Teacher certification testing.
- Hosted Pathways to Teaching Expo combining university partnerships and teaching licensure programs.
- Enhanced Aspiring Administrators Academy and strengthened the leadership pipeline internally (a number of participants successfully secured an advanced role for the 2023-2024 school year).
- Hired from within: 10/17 participants in Aspiring Principals Program in its first three years of operation became principals by July 1, 2023.

ACPSD has partnered with GCU for

LOW-COST CONTINUING EDUCATION

Check out our perk from Grand Canyon University offering online degree programs with scholarships and tuition discounts available just for ACPSD employees and their families.



Program	Room Number	5:00-5:30	5:30-5:45	5:50-6:05	6:15-6:30	6:30-7:00
Alt Pathways to Ed Cert (APEC)	C141	Participants visit tables	break/table	Session 1	Session 2	Participants visit tables
American College of Ed	C150		Session 1	break/table	Session 2	
Grand Canyon	C151		Session 1	Session 2	break/table	
North Greenville	C152		Session 1	Session 2	break/table	
PACE, American Board	C153		Session 1	break/table	Session 2	
SC Create	C154		Session 1	Session 2	break/table	
Teach SC	C155		Session 1	break/table	Session 2	
Teachers of Tomorrow (Virtual)	Media Center (Ashley Watson to lead.)		break/table	Session 1	Session 2	
The Citadel	C156		break/table	Session 1	Session 2	
USC Aiken	C157		Session 1	Session 2	break/table	
Walden	C158		Session 1	Session 2	break/table	

Staying Power

- Established an employee newsletter to engage staff and ensure communications in varied formats.
- Enhanced pre-hire connectivity with new to district teachers before their first day.
- Piloted "Stay Interviews" to support retention efforts and encourage relationships among supervisors and staff.
- Engaged induction teachers in monthly self-care tips to encourage wellness and prevent burnout.
- Created a streamlined process for employees to submit a request for accommodations.

AIKEN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS June 2023 Vol 1 Issue 9

Let's Relate
An Employee Relations Newsletter

FEATURED EMPLOYEE PERK PerformanceAbove
Performance Above Golf Performance & Physical Therapy is offering ACPSD Employees \$50 Future Assessments (PT/OT/ST).

Visit ACPSD Employee Perks at www.acpsd.net or call 800-800-0299 for more information on many other perks just for ACPSD employees!

WHAT'S IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE:

- Featured Employee Perk
- EAP: The Facts about PTSD
- PEBA Perk
- June Awareness
- Upcoming Events

Summer Time

EAP FEATURED RESOURCE
The Facts about PTSD
This month's featured resource includes a webinar that will discuss Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome. What is it, what are its causes, and how is it treated? Let's get the facts.

Log in using the information below to view the [The Science of Happiness](#) webinar.

For this and other resources, ACPSD employees can access the [Employee Assistance Program](#) in the following ways:

- Online: Via www.eap.aikenpsd.com. Enter the Password: Aiken
- Via Phone: To request services, please call 800-800-0299.
- Via the App: Download EAP Connect from Apple Store or Google Play. Password: Aiken

FOR MORE VISIT: www.acpsd.net • I AM... > AN EMPLOYEE



The stay interview process...

finding information and talking with each employee about what makes them stay, what might prompt them to leave, what are things we can do differently."

-Jennifer Hart, Chief Officer of HR/Administration

Types of Self-Care

Physical Sleep Stretching Walking Exercise Nutrition Yoga	Emotional Stress Management Coping Skills Compassion Therapy Journaling	Social Boundaries Support System Positive Social Media Communication Friends	Spiritual Time Alone Meditation Prayer Nature Sacred Space
Personal Hobbies Creativity Goals Identity Authenticity	Space Safety Healthy Environment Stability Clean Space	Financial Saving Budgeting Money Management Paying Bills Boundaries	Work Time Management Work Boundaries Breaks

